THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (d) Opinions and suggestions, on modification or continuation of the policy regarding operation of foreign news agencies within the country, have been invited by the Government.

(e) The time-frame for taking a final decision in a policy matter of this nature cannot be stated at this stage.

Scheme on CAS

82. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY:
SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the scheme of Conditional Access System is facing problems in its implementation;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the cable operators are not coming to terms regarding the implementation of the scheme;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the consumers are not keen to go for the set top box and prefer to view through the cable operators; and

(d) if so, what compromising formula is being worked out to protect the consumers and the steps taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (d) After monitoring the preparedness of different stakeholders to introduce the CAS and after extensive discussions with the stakeholders, Broadcasters, Multi System Operators, Cable Operators, Consumer Groups, etc., it has been decided to take up implementation of CAS in a phased zone-wise manner in the metros of Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata and in the entire Chennai Metropolitan area, w.e.f. 1.9.2003. The intervening period will be utilized to step up preparedness for smooth roll out of CAS and for educating the subscribers and increasing awareness. Some MSOs/Cable Operators have come out with consumer-friendly schemes through which the STBs will be made available to consumers. Copy of Notification issued on 10th July, 2003 is available on Ministry's website "www.mib.nic.in".